

Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Public Participation in County Governance in Kenya: A Case of Nairobi County

Cleophas Ndiege Kaseya^{*}, Dr. Ephantus Kihonge^{**}

^{*} Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Governance, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

^{**} Supervisor, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Abstract- The study was conceptualized with a view to addressing the following objectives: to assess the extent to which civic education influence public participation in County Governments; to assess the extent to which the provision of financial incentives influence public participation in County Governments and to assess the extent to which scheduling of forums affect public participation in County Governments. The study employed a survey design with a sample size of 240 beneficiaries, and 10 representatives of the government and civil society organizations. The sampling procedure used was purposive sampling technique. The study instruments used were questionnaires. For validity and reliability of the research instruments pilot study and test-retest were used. The data was coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20. From the findings of the study it was evident that civic education plays a major role on the effectiveness of public participation in the County Government. When the residents are enlightened on their rights of participation in the affairs of the County Government, they tend to participate more and demand for their rights. It was also evident from the findings that civic education has been conducted in the County as 68.5 percent of the County residents confirmed having participated in the civic education forums. The civic education forums are mostly conducted by Civil Society Organizations and the County Government. The findings show that civic education has been effective in meeting its intended purpose with 86 percent concurring. Finally a number of strategies were proposed to enhance public participation. These include offering incentives, early notification of public participation forums, use of variety of methods, allocating more funds for civic education, formulation of policy to guide public participation among others. In view of the foregoing findings, this study makes the following recommendations: the County Government should intensify civic education especially among the poorer section of the community. This will ensure that their priorities are addressed by the County Government; the County Government should enhance the incentives given to participants during public participation forums. These may include transport refund and lunch allowances and public participation forums should mostly be conducted during weekends. This would improve attendance. Based on the findings of this study, further study should be conducted on the effect of level of education on the effectiveness of public participation in county governance in Kenya.

Index Terms- Public Participation, Governance, Devolution

I. INTRODUCTION

The centralized system of government in Kenya can be traced to the colonial days when it was meant to exclusively serve the interests of colonial masters. Post-independence saw the introduction of a quasi-federal system that never was. Political support for the system dwindled and the independence government actively reverted to recentralization of the state reintroducing challenges of a centralized system the country had struggled with until the promulgation of the current constitution in 2010. As a result, Kenyans have invested high hopes in devolution as a means of eliminating development imbalances and poverty (NTA, 2013).

Devolution is widely seen as a mechanism to institutionalize citizen participation in development planning, increase the opportunities for political participation thereby enhancing democratic political culture and enhance communities' sense of ownership (Oloo, 2006). Kenya's devolution, adopted following the March 2013 general elections, is expansive in scope and implementation timelines.

Creswell (2007) in a paper prepared for the California Department of Housing and Community Development observes that to build support for local housing solutions, community participation needs to be at the very core of the Housing Element process. It is "where the rubber meets the road." In fact, a participatory program of education, input, dialogue, and consensus-building can be one of the key strategies for responding to community housing needs. By engaging community residents in a frank discussion of local housing issues and needs, the Housing Element can: develop a greater appreciation among local residents for the depth and breadth of housing needs in their community; counter stereotypes about "affordable housing" and its potential benefits and impacts; introduce concepts such as "workforce housing" and the interrelationship between jobs and housing; explore ways that affordable housing is part of the solution to traffic, quality of life, and open space issues; focus attention on design and management issues that often make the most difference in the long-term viability and acceptability of affordable housing; establish an overall framework for land use and development decisions that reflects community values and priorities, thereby facilitating subsequent project-specific review and approval; build a foundation for other community planning initiatives related to smart growth and sustainability; and provide a positive

experience in constructive community engagement with benefits that far outlast the Housing Element process itself.

Before the promulgation of the constitution, Kenya had tried various ways to encourage citizens to participate in decision making. For instance through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Act, a number of mechanisms have been proposed through which citizen participation is conducted. One of the mechanisms of public participation is through representation, that is, CDF Committee. Members of the committee are supposed to be elected from the ward taking into account the geographical diversity within the constituency, communal, religious, social and cultural interests in the constituency and the requirements of gender, youth and representation of persons with disabilities. By defining these groups, the Act encourages representation of various interests in the management of the affairs of the fund. To a certain extent this can facilitate public participation. It is evident that where the committees were properly constituted there was a higher level of success in prioritization, ownership of projects and overall success in management.

Sithole (2005) defines public participation “as a democratic process of engaging people in thinking, deciding, planning and playing an active part in the development and operation of services that affect their lives.” The World Bank (1996) further defines public participation as “a process in which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and the resources which affect them”. It is a two-way communication and collaborative problem solving with the goal of achieving better and more acceptable decisions.

Participation is also encouraged in the Act through selection and oversight by the Project Management Committees (PMCs). This involves the selection and prioritization of development projects by citizens and formation of PMCs to help in the implementation of the projects funded by the fund (NTA, 2013). One key emphasis in the constitution is the need for the two levels of governments to continuously engage its citizens in any decision making process. The spirit of public participation runs throughout the constitution. It seeks and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision. This can be in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, companies or any other entities that affect public interests. The principle of public participation holds that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.

Meaningful citizen participation in governance is a key ingredient for public reforms that were instituted by the Constitution of Kenya (CoK, 2010). Article 1 (1) of the Constitution vests all sovereign power to the people of Kenya. This power can be expressed through direct participation or indirectly through elected representatives. In addition, various pieces of legislations anchoring devolution highlight the principles of citizen participation. Together, these constitutional and legislative provisions avail various platforms for citizen participation in devolved governance. Citizen participation is one of the national values and is also one of the principles of public service as articulated in the Constitution in Articles 10 (2,a), Article 35(1) and (3) and Article 232 (1).

There is much talk about involving ordinary citizens more definitively and directly in the policy process. Dialogue, deliberation and citizen engagement are increasingly familiar

landmarks on the current public participation landscape as efforts to design more collegial and collaborative public involvement processes compete with more traditional top-down approaches. Public deliberation, a defining concept of deliberative democracy theory, is experiencing a renaissance among both scholars and policymakers. Televised town halls are now commonplace during election campaigns. Citizen dialogues have been used to elicit informed opinion and to probe for shared public values in conjunction with major policy reform initiatives. The origins of this trend have been discussed widely and include arguments of declining citizen deference to public officials, vociferous calls for greater legitimacy and accountability, and a desire to bring government closer to the people.

Article 174 of the constitution gives the powers of self-governance to the people and enhances the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them. Citizen participation is not a favour but a constitutional obligation that both levels of government must adhere to. It must be clearly defined by the county government in agreement with the citizens to achieve satisfactory results. The government must agree with the citizens on processes, procedures, entry levels, safeguards to citizens’ decisions and guarantees that their needs and priorities will come first.

Article 201 of the constitution lays down some key public finance principles including the need to ensure that there is openness and accountability in all public financial matters and that public participation will be emphasized in the whole budget process and decision making processes. The constitution further provides that public finance should promote an equitable society where burdens and benefits from the use of public resource will be shared equitably. Public money shall be used in a prudent and responsible manner and this should be accompanied by clear financial reporting. Chapter 12 of the constitution on public finance and the Act that gives it effect, the Public Financial Management (PFM) Act 2012, have transformed the budget process in Kenya. The legal responsibility to manage finances allocated by the national government now rests with the County governments. Other institutions like the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) will now play a significant role in financial allocations to counties. Part IV of the PFM Act establishes County Treasuries. The County Revenue Fund will also be established by all counties as the golden pot for all revenues received or rose by or on behalf of county governments.

Despite these clear constitutional and legislative provisions there has been an outcry across the country over certain decisions which have been made by counties over the last three years. In a number of counties citizens have taken their County governments to court over issues ranging from Finance Bills, which ascribe levies to be charged for various County services, to identification and implementation of projects. Some counties have had their Finance Bills annulled by the courts while other counties have had disbursement of funds for development projects delayed due to complaints emanating from the citizens. This project is therefore aimed at assessing the effectiveness of public participation in county governance in Kenya: A case of Nairobi County.

Participatory Development in Kenya like in many other countries was for decades confined to community development

projects which were mainly donor funded and supervised (Wakwabubi and Shiverenje, 2003).

Kenya attempted to institutionalize decentralized planning and implementation of its programmes as early as the 1960s through Sessional Papers. The most comprehensive one was the District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) Strategy which became operational in 1983. However, the Strategy emphasized involvement of central government field workers in planning and implementation of programmes and therefore ignored indigenous knowledge and experiences. Chitere and Ileri (2004) notes this is contrary to the conception of the participatory approach. Ideally in participation, development workers such as civil servants have a role in facilitating the process through assisting communities to identify and solve their own problems.

The DFRD Strategy also faced challenges in implementation because it lacked statutory anchorage that could entrench the coordinating committees in the law. The operations were carried out administratively rather than legally. This has been a characteristic of decentralized policies in Kenya whereby some funds have been created by Acts of Parliament and therefore have had legal backing. However, others have been created through policy pronouncements and consequently have had no guarantee of continuity (KHRC and SPAN, 2010).

The enactment of the Physical Planning Act in 1996 saw further evolution of participatory development. The Statute did provide for community participation in the preparation and implementation of physical and development plans. However, its major shortfall is the lack of the critical element of community sensitization on their roles. Physical planning is also centralized in major towns and thus communities residing in remote areas remained marginalized in participatory planning (Okello, 2008). Over the past one decade, the LASDAP and CDF have been the main vehicles of community participation at the local level. The LASDAP was introduced in 2001 through a ministerial circular whilst the CDF was established in 2003 through the CDF Act (2004). The LASDAP were a three year rolling plans that are required to have a poverty focus with priority areas in health, education and infrastructure (Kibua and Oyugi, 2006). The LASDAP provided opportunities for the local authorities to constructively engage with local communities on matters of planning, budgeting and development. The CDF Act on the other hand targets constituency level development projects particularly those aiming to combat poverty at the Constituency level. The main objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of Public Participation in County Governance in Kenya: A case for the Nairobi City County. The specific objectives were: to assess the extent to which civic education influence the effectiveness of public participation in County Governments, to assess the extent to which the provision of financial incentives influence the effectiveness of public participation in County Governments and to assess the extent to which scheduling of forums affect the effectiveness of public participation in County Governments.

II. THEORETICAL LITERATURE

2.1.1 *The Civic Voluntarism Model*

The most well-known and widely applied model of political participation in political science was originally referred to as the resources model and had its origins in the work of Verba and Nie

(1972) in their research on participation in the United States. According to this model, the social status of an individual—his job, education, and income—determines to a large extent how much he participates. It does this through the intervening effects of a variety of “civic attitudes” conducive to participation: attitudes such as a sense of efficacy, of psychological involvement in politics and a feeling of obligation to participate (Verba&Nie 1972).

2.1.2 *The Rational Choice Model*

Rational choice theory has played an important role in the analysis of political participation. The rational choice model is summarized succinctly in the following terms: “A rational man is one who behaves as follows: he can always make a decision when confronted with a range of alternatives; he ranks all the alternatives facing him in order of his preferences in such a way that each is either preferred to, indifferent to, or inferior to each other; his preference ranking is transitive; he always chooses from among the possible alternatives that which ranks highest in his preference ordering; and he always makes the same decision each time he is confronted with the same alternatives (Downs, 1957).

2.1.3 *The Communicative Action Theory*

Communicative action is a theory which aims to explain human rationality as the necessary outcome of successful communication (Mitrovic, 1999). The theory can be traced to the German philosopher and sociologist, Jürgen Habermas, who argues that the potential for rationality is inherent in communication and action, and represents a critical synthesis (Habermas, 1987). Habermas’ general theoretical objective is to link communicative action theory, as a variant of action theory, with systems theory into a comprehensive approach to social theory (Mitrovic, 1999). The theory of Communicative Action has influenced thinking about the way in which planning and policy-making should happen. The theory emphasizes two key concepts to the study of public participation in these processes: argumentation and the role of culture and language.

2.1.4 *Arnstein’s Ladder of participation Model*

Perhaps the seminal theoretical work on the subject of community participation was by Arnstein (1969). The particular importance of Arnstein’s work stems from the recognition that there are different levels of participation, from manipulation, through to consultation, and to what we might now view as genuine participation, i.e. the levels of partnership and citizen control. The limitations of Arnstein’s framework are obvious. Each of the steps represents a very broad category, within which there are likely to be a wide range of experiences. For example, at the level of ‘informing’ there could be significant differences in the type and quality of the information being conveyed. Realistically therefore, levels of participation are likely to reflect a more complex continuum than a simple series of steps. The use of a ladder also implies that more control is always better than less control. However, increased control may not always be desired by the community and increased control without the necessary support may result in failure.

2.2 Empirical Literature

Watson (2001) defines civic education in a democracy as education in self-government. Democratic self-government means that citizens are actively involved in their own governance; they do not just passively accept the dictums of others or acquiesce to the demands of others. As Aristotle put it in his *Politics* (340 BC), "If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost." In other words, the ideals of democracy are most completely realized when every member of the political community shares in its governance. Members of the political community are its citizens; hence citizenship in a democracy is membership in the body politic. Membership implies participation, but not participation for participation's sake. Citizen participation in a democratic society must be based on informed, critical reflection, and on the understanding and acceptance of the rights and responsibilities that go with that membership.

According to a research Finkel (2000), civic education programmes provide explicit instruction to ordinary citizens about democratic institutions, values, and procedures. The findings of the research found that civic education programmes do contribute to the development of a democratic political culture amongst participants. These programmes have been found to significantly increase individuals' political information, feelings of empowerment, and levels of political participation. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, people who participated in education sessions were significantly more democratically aware over time than those in villages where sessions did not take place. In Kenya, individuals who attended civic education workshops were more likely to report increased awareness of the contents of the constitution and of various proposals being discussed to reform the constitution, as compared to people who did not attend workshops.

Masango (2002) favours capacity building to improve the public's understanding of governance processes and to ensure that they participate effectively in governance processes. According to Cuthill and Fien (2005), capacity building for communities involves "working with communities". This, to them, involves "support, and enhances the existing ability, energy and knowledge of citizens." Arnstein (1969) argues that the ability of citizens to influence decisions depends on the "quality of technical assistance they have in articulating their priorities; and the extent to which the community has been organized to press those priorities". Cuthill and Fien (2005) place the responsibility for capacitating citizens with local government. Their argument is that the position of local government in relation to citizens makes them the right institution to capacitate citizens to ensure that they participate meaningfully in local government processes (Cuthill and Fien 2005).

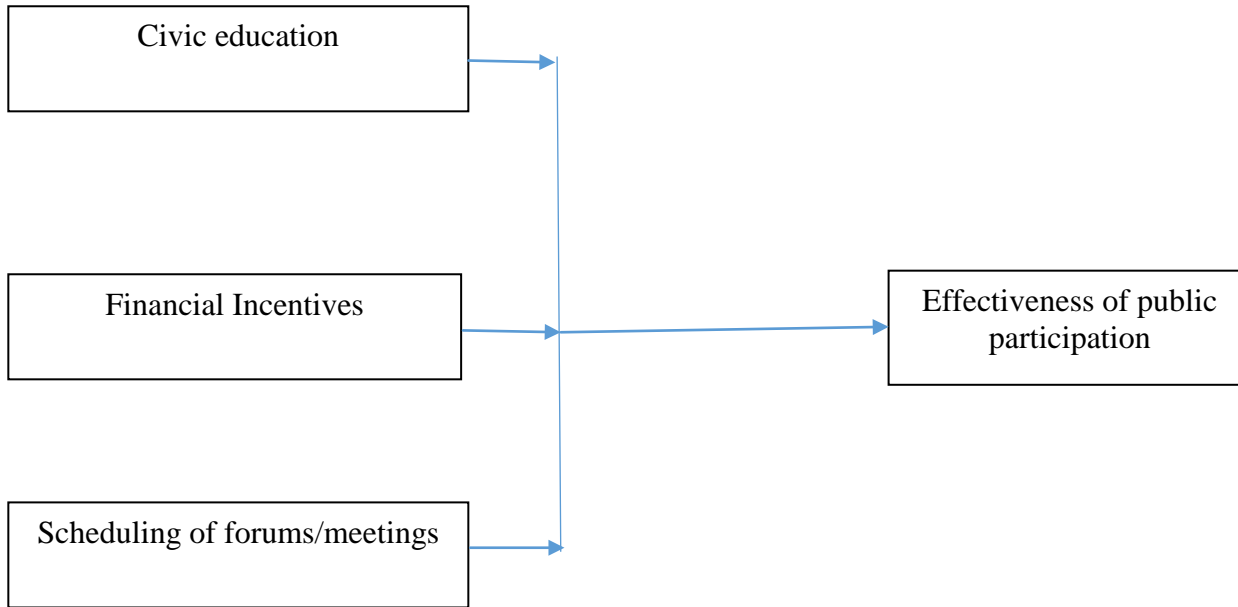
Masango (2002) stresses the importance of public awareness of matters related to local government in promoting public participation in policy-making. Glover (2003) emphasized that information sharing in the policy process is a requirement to ensure "effective and inclusive public participation". She stressed that this is merely one movement amongst other important ones. She reiterates the importance of the nature and ways in which information is provided. She also suggests the use of "appropriate and accessible" methods of providing information. This involves information on the contributions made by the public in the policy process. Below is a brief discussion of the types of participation, using Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation. This will be used to analyze the nature of participation and quality of participation in the present study.

According to Kugonza and Mukobi (2011) public participation is affected by Access to information which enables citizens articulate their voice, effectively monitor, hold government accountable and enter into informed dialogue about decisions which affect their lives. According to them information empowers all citizens including vulnerable and excluded people to claim their broader rights and entitlements. They found out that informed citizens can stand up for their rights and hold public officials accountable for their actions and decisions. According to the findings, majority of the respondents disagreed with the view that all the information on government projects is available and accessible to the community members. The study established that information was not provided in a timely manner. Dissemination of information was not effectively and timely done by both the general public and the government. They concluded that there is a positive relationship between information accessibility and participation in lower local government projects.

Kakonge (1996) pointed out that public participation is affected by lack of communication between the government and the people. He said that projects are formulated without the dissemination of by the government of information among local people.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. It further shows any other factor that may have any effect on the two variables. The conceptual frame in this particular study shows that the effectiveness of public participation depends primarily on factors such as civic education, provision of financial incentives and scheduling of public participation forums. Moderating variable include various Government regulations on public participation while intervening variable is the level of education of various stakeholders



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive research design in the form of survey design. Churchill (1991) contends that survey design is appropriate where the study seeks to describe the characteristics of certain groups, estimate the proportion of people who have certain characteristics and make certain predictions. It describes the situation as it is without manipulation. The study aims to assess the factors that determine the effectiveness of public participation in county governance in Kenya. The survey design has been chosen because it is useful in describing the characteristics of a large population. Secondly, the population is geographically diverse. This would not enable the administration of the instrument to the entire population.

In carrying out this study, two categories of respondents were involved: residents of Nairobi City County who are the beneficiaries of county projects and; the County government and civil society organizations representatives including women and youth group's leaders and people living with disabilities representatives. The beneficiaries were sampled from four constituencies, namely Ruaraka, Mathare, Dagoreti and Westlands.

The study used purposive sampling to select 240 beneficiaries from four electoral constituencies out of a total of sixteen electoral constituencies. This was necessary because the population of the County is to a larger extent homogenous. As such there was no need to sample in all constituencies. Within each sampled electoral constituency, the researcher further purposively sampled 60 people for the interview. For the second category of respondents, ten respondents were selected from the county government officers and Civil Society Organizations representatives. Two sets of questionnaires were used in this study. The first set was administered to the residents of Nairobi City County. The second set was administered to the

representatives of Civil Society Organizations and government officers in an open interview.

To ensure validity, the instruments were discussed by experts. Secondly, a pilot study was carried out with a few respondents. To ensure reliability of the instruments test-retest was used. To comply towards ethical considerations, a letter of introduction was obtained from the university supervisor. A copy of the letter was shown to the respondents as evidence of the authorization of the study. The instruments were administered with the help of research assistants.

The data was coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 software. Descriptive analysis of quantitative data was used with percentages and frequency tables. Qualitative data was organized into themes and presented into percentages using frequency tables.

IV. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Response Rate

The study involved the development of two sets of questionnaires. One set targeted 240 respondents from Nairobi residents who are the beneficiaries of County Government services. The second set of questionnaires targeted 10 representatives of government and civil society organizations. Out of the 240 beneficiaries who took part in the survey, 235 of them responded. This translated to 98 percent response rate. Of the 10 government and civil society representatives, 8 of them responded. This constituted 80 percent response rate.

4.1.2 Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 4.1 gives information on the proportion of male and female beneficiaries involved in the survey. Approximately 61.3

percent of those who took part in the survey were male while the remaining 38.7 percent were female.

Table 4.1: Gender of the beneficiaries

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	144	61.3
Female	91	38.7
Total	235	100.0

4.1.2 Age Groups of Respondents

Table 4.2 shows the age groups of the respondents. Majority of the respondents (48.9 percent) were within the age group 26-35 years, 24.3 percent were aged between 18-25 years, and 20.9 percent were aged between 36-50 years while the remaining 6.0 percent were aged above 51 years.

Table 4.2: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-25 years	57	24.3
26-35 years	115	48.9
36-50 years	49	20.9
Above 51 years	14	6.0
Total	235	100.0

4.1.3 Occupation of Respondents

Table 4.3 shows the occupations of the respondents. 1.7 percent of the respondents were farmers, 31.9 percent were business persons, 17.0 percent were civil servants, 9.4 percent were teachers and 40.0 percent were in other professions.

Table 4.3: Occupations of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Farmers	4	1.7
Civil Servants	40	17.0
Business persons	75	31.9
Teachers	22	9.4
Others	94	40.0
Total	235	100.0

4.1.4 Level of Education of the Respondents

Table 4.4 shows the level of education of the respondents. Majority of the respondents (34.0 percent) had attained the tertiary level of education, 28.5 percent secondary level, 25.5 percent university, 9.8 percent primary 5-8 level while the remaining 2.1 percent primary 1-4.

Table 4.4: Level of education of Respondents

Level of education	Frequency	Percent
Primary 1-4	5	2.1
Primary 5-8	23	9.8
Secondary	67	28.5
Tertiary	80	34.0

University	60	25.5
Total	235	100.0

4.1.5 Civic Education on the Importance of Public Participation

The survey sought to find out whether County residents have been sensitized on the importance of public participation. To conclusively address the significance of sensitization on public participation the survey further asked a number of additional questions. For instance, who conducted the sensitization; whether the sensitization met their expectations; whether the sensitization was effective and how the county government can improve public participation.

In an open interview with county government officers and civil society representatives, they were also asked their view on whether the county government sensitizes the public on the importance of participation on county affairs.

Table 4.5 shows the result obtained when residents of Nairobi County were asked whether they have been sensitized on the importance of public participation. From the findings 68.5 percent of the respondents intimated that they have been sensitized while 31.5 percent indicated that they have not been sensitized.

Table 4.5: Civic Education on the Importance of Public Participation

Sensitization	Frequency	Percent
Yes	161	68.5
No	74	31.5
Total	235	100.0

It is evident that majority of the respondents had not been sensitized. This is represented by 31.5 percent. Civil Society Organization is the main actor in sensitization at 29.4 percent. This is closely followed by the County Government at 28.5 percent. Those who indicated that they were sensitized by the National Government were 9.4 percent. A further 1.3 percent of the respondents were sensitized by the other organizations. These findings are represented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Stakeholders in Civic Education

	Frequency	Percent
Not sensitized	74	31.5
County Government	67	28.5
National Government	22	9.4
Civil Society Organization	69	29.4
Others	3	1.3
Total	235	100.0

When the respondents were asked whether the sensitization met their objectives, 80 percent answered in the affirmative while 20 percent were not satisfied with the sensitization. This is represented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Level of satisfaction with Civic Education

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	134	80.0
No	27	20.0
Total	161	100.0

On the question whether the sensitization was effective 51 percent of the respondents indicated that the sensitization was fairly effective, 35 percent indicated that the sensitization was very effective and 14 percent indicated that the sensitization was ineffective. This is represented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Effectiveness of Civic Education

	Frequency	Percent
Very Effective	56	35.0
Fairly Effective	82	51.0
Ineffective	22	14.0
Total	161	100.0

When the respondents were asked the strategies that the County Government should use to improve civic education, 40 percent of the respondents indicated that offering incentives is a good strategy to improve civic education. Early notifications of sensitization meetings and others strategies were each ranked 20 percent. Other strategies include Use a variety of methods and Allocating more funds for civic education each at 10 percent. Table 4.9 represents these findings.

Table 4.9: Strategies to Improve Public Participation

Strategies	Frequency	Percent
Offering Incentives	80	40.0
Early Notifications	37	20.0
Others	34	20.0
Use a variety of methods	18	10.0
Allocating more funds for civic education	14	10.0
Formulate policy to guide public participation	7	0.0
Total	190	100.0

When the government officers and civil society organizations were asked whether the county government sensitize the public on the importance of participation on county affairs, a majority of the respondents (62.5 percent) indicated that the County Government does not sensitize the public on the importance of public participation. This was majorly the feeling of the civil society organizations. The findings are summarized in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: County Government's Sensitization

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	37.5
No	5	62.5
Total	8	100.0

From the above research findings, it can be deduced that there is a significant level of sensitization on the importance of public participation in County Government affairs. For instance 68.5 percent of the beneficiaries indicated that they have been sensitized on the importance of public participation.

4.1.6 Financial Incentives Influence on Public Participation

The study set to find out whether financial incentives offered to participants during public participation forums would have an effect on public participation. In this regard, the respondents were asked whether participants are offered financial incentives whenever they attend such forums. They were further asked the adequacy of the financial incentives and whether they would attend public participation forums if no financial incentive is offered.

When asked whether the County Government offer financial incentives to participants, 70 percent of the respondents answered in the affirmative while the remaining 30 percent said that no financial incentive is offered during such forums. A summary of the findings is represented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Response to the Offer of Financial Incentives to Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	166	70.0
No	69	30.0
Total	235	100.0

The result was corroborated by the findings from the open interview which indicated that 62.5 percent of the respondents concurred that financial incentives are offered to participants. Table 4.12 gives a summary of the government officers and civil society organizations response to whether financial incentives are offered to staff during public participation.

Table 4.12: Civil Society and Government Officers' response to offer of Financial Incentives

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	62.5
No	3	37.5
Total	8	100.0

The respondents were asked about the adequacy of the financial objectives offered to participants by the County Government during public participation forums. A majority of the respondents at 70 percent felt that the financial incentives were either adequate or fairly adequate. Only 30 percent of the respondents felt that the financial incentives were either inadequate or very inadequate. Table 4.13 gives a summary of these findings.

Table 4.13: Adequacy of the Financial Incentives

	Frequency	Percent
Adequate	25	10.0
Fairly adequate	104	60.0
Inadequate	45	20.0
Very Inadequate	8	10.0
Total	182	100.0

When Civil Society Organizations and Government officers were asked how financial incentives effect public participation, 62.5 percent indicated that financial incentives would encourage attendance of public participation forums. The remaining 37.5 percent indicated that offering of financial incentives boosts participants' morale. Table 4.14 shows the effect of financial incentives on public participations.

Table 4.14: Effect of Financial Incentive on Public Participation

	Frequency	Percent
Boosts morale	3	37.5
Encourages attendance	5	62.5
Total	8	100.0

When the residents were asked whether they would attend public participation forums when there is no financial incentives, 70 percent of the respondents said they would attend while 30 percent said they would not attend if no financial incentive is offered. Table 4.15 gives a summary of the level of participation if no financial incentive is not offered.

Table 4.15: Participation if no Financial Incentive is not provided

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	172	70.0
No	60	30.0
Total	232	100.0

4.1.7 Scheduling of Meetings’Effect on Public Participation

The research was also geared towards establishing whether scheduling of public forums have an effect on public participation. In this regard there was almost unanimity that public participation forums should be held over the weekends when most people are at home. 80% of the respondents said that public participation forums should be held over the weekend. Only 20% said that these forums should be held during week days. Table 4.16 shows which days of the week are preferred for public participation.

Table 4.16: Scheduling of Public Participation Forums

	Frequency	Percent
Week days	41	20.0
Weekends	192	80.0
Total	233	100.0

These findings were in agreement with the findings from the open interview which indicated that 75 percent of the respondents were of the view that public participation should be held over the weekend. 25 percent of the respondents however said that public participation forum should be held during week days.

The respondents were further asked if the county government provides enough notice for public participation, 60 percent of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the County Government provide enough notice for public participation. Only 40 percent of the respondents disagreed that enough notice is provided. Table 4.17 gives a summary of the findings.

Table 4.17: Notification for Public Participation

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	22	10.0
Agree	116	50.0
Disagree	87	40.0
Strongly disagree	7	0.0
Total	232	100.0

On the adequacy of the time set aside for public participation, 70 percent of the respondents felt that the time provided was adequate while 30 percent disagreed. This is summarized in table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Adequacy of Time allowed for Public Participation

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	30	10.0
Agree	132	60.0
Disagree	64	30.0

Strongly disagree	6	0.0
Total	232	100.0

The County Government uses different methods for public participation. These include social media at 34 percent, mass media at 31.1 percent, website 14 percent, public meetings 14 percent and others 6.4 percent. Table 4.19 shows the various methods of public participation used by the County Government.

Table 4.19 Methods of Public Participation

	Frequency	Percent
Mass media	73	31.1
Social media	80	34.0
Websites	33	14.0
Others	15	6.4
Public Meetings	33	14.0
Total	235	100.0

Finally on the strategies to improve public participation, 37.5 percent of the civil society organizations and government officers indicated that the participants should be provided with incentives to encourage them to participate, another 37.5 percent said there need to be proper timing, 12.5 percent said there is need for increased awareness and another 12.5 percent indicated that public participation should be devolved to the wards. This is shown in table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Strategies to Improve Public Participation

	Frequency	Percent
Provide incentive	3	37.5
Proper timing	3	37.5
Increased awareness	1	12.5
Devolve participation to wards	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

V. SUMMARY

From the findings of the study it is evident that civic education plays a major role on the effectiveness of public participation in the County Government. When the residents are enlightened on their rights of participation in the affairs of the County Government, they tend to participate more and demand for their rights. It is evident from the findings that civic education has been conducted in the County as 68.5 percent of the County residents confirmed having participated in the civic education forums. The civic education forums are mostly conducted by Civil Society Organizations and the County Government. The findings show that civic education has been effective in meeting its intended purpose with 86 percent concurring.

The survey sought to find out whether provision of financial incentives influences the effectiveness of public participation in the County Government. There was a general consensus that that County Government provides financial incentives to participants. This was the finding from the beneficiaries and; the civil society organizations and government officers. The respondents felt that

provision of financial incentives boost the morale of the respondents and also encourage attendance.

The survey further sought to find out whether scheduling of public participation forums are affected by the effectiveness of public participation, the findings show that public participation is greatly affected by the day of the week the forum is scheduled. It was noted that public participation forums organized during the week days attract less audience. This is attributable to the fact that during the week days people tend to be busy at their places of work. It is therefore imperative that public participation forums are held over the weekends to enable high attendance.

Finally a number of strategies were proposed to enhance public participation. These include offering incentives, early notification of public participation forums, use of variety of methods, allocating more funds for civic education, formulation of policy to guide public participation among others.

5.1 Recommendations

5.2.1 Policy Recommendations

In view of the foregoing findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. The County Government should intensify civic education especially among the poorer section of the community. This will ensure that their priorities are addressed by the County Government.
2. The County Government should enhance the incentives given to participants during public participation forums. These may include transport refund and lunch allowances.
3. Public participation forums should mostly be conducted during weekends. This would improve attendance.

5.2.2 Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the findings of this study, further study should be conducted on the effect of level of education on the effectiveness of public participation in county governance in Kenya.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnstein, S 1969, 'A ladder of citizen participation', AIP Journal, vol. 35, no. 4, July 1969, pp. 216–24.
- [2] Borg, W.R and Gall, M.D (1989). Educational research: An introduction, 5th edition. New York: Longman
- [3] Carmines E.G and Zeller R.A (1979), Reliability and Validity Assessment: *Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences*. Sage Publications. New York.
- [4] Chitere P.O and Ireri O. (2004), District Focus for Rural Development in Kenya: Its Limitations as a decentralization and participatory planning strategy and prospects for the future, Nairobi Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Nairobi.
- [5] Cuthill, M & Fien, J 2005, 'Capacity building: Facilitating citizen participation in local governance', Australian Journal of Public Administration, vol. 64, no. 4, pp. 63–80.
- [6] Finkel S. et al. 2011: Civic education and democratic backsliding in the wake of Kenya's Post Election violence.
- [7] DeSario and Stuart Langton. (1987): *Citizen Participation in Public decision making*: Greenwood Press, New York.
- [8] Gaventa I (2007) Participation makes a difference: But not always how and where we might expect. *Development Outreach*.
- [9] Gomm R. (2008), *Social Research Methodology: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [10] Government of Kenya. 2012. *Public Finance Management Act 2012*. The Government Printer. Nairobi
- [11] Habermas, Jürgen. 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action* Beacon Press.
- [12] [Hindess, B 2000, 'Representation Ingrafted upon Democracy?', Democratization, vol. 7.](#)
- [13] Kakonge J.O (1996): problems with public participation in EIA Process: examples from sub-Saharan Africa
- [14] **Kantrowitz P. (1975): The Theory of Citizen Participation.**
- [15] Kaheer N (Ed) (2005) *Inclusive citizenship: Meanings and expressions*. London: Zed Books.
- [16] Kerlinger, F. N. (1983): *Foundations of Behavioral Research* 2nd Edition, Holt Rinehard and Wiston Inc. New York.
- [17] Kothari, C. R. (1985): *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. Willey Eastern Limited, New Delhi.
- [18] KHRC & SPAN (2010), Harmonization of Decentralized Development in Kenya: Towards Alignment, Citizen Engagement and Accountability, Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) & Social and Public Accountability Network (SPAN).
- [19] King, Cheryl Simrell, Kathryn M. Feltey, and Bridget O'Neill Susel. 1998. The Question of Participation: Toward Authentic Public Participation in Public Administration. *Public Administration Review* 58(4).
- [20] Lepofsky J. and Fraser J. (2003): *Building Community Citizens: Claiming the Right to Place-making in the City*.
- [21] Mantysalo, Raine (2005), Approaches to participation in urban planning theories; available at <http://virtuaali.tkk.fi/yhdyskuntasuunnittelu/ytkeri/materia/mantysalo.pdf>.
- [22] National Taxpayers Association, 2013. Budget Transparency and Citizen Participation in Counties in Kenya
- [23] Okello, M et al. 2008. Participatory Urban Planning Toolkit Based on the Kitale Experience: A guide to Community Based Action Planning for Effective Infrastructure and Services Delivery. Practical Action. Nairobi.
- [24] Oyugi, N. and Kibua, T. N. 2006. *Planning and Budgeting at the Grassroots Level: The Case of Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plans*. IPAR. Nairobi
- [25] Paton C. and Sawicki. 1986: *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*, Prentice-Hall.
- [26] Kweit G. and Kweit R. 1986: *Implementing citizen participation in a bureaucratic society: a contingency approach*.
- [27] Praeger
- [28] Schindler, P. (2003): *Business Research Methods* 8th Edition, McGraw Hill, Boston.
- [29] Seliger, H.W and Shohamy, E. (1989, 1995), *Research Methods: Planning: Validity*, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press
- [30] Sithole P. (2005), *Decentralising Voice: Women's Participation in Integrated Development Planning Process in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa*.
- [31] Sylvester K. & Robert M. (2011), *Factors Affecting Public Participation in Services Delivery Projects in Buikwe District Local Government Uganda*.
- [32] Jennings, M. Kent., and Richard Niemi. 1974. *The Political Character of Adolescence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [33] Lane M. 2005: *Public Participation in Planning: an intellectual history: Australian Geographer*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 283/299, November 2005
- [34] Verba, Sidney and Norman Nie. 1972. *Participation in America*. New York: Harper and Row.
- [35] Watson, P. (2001). *The Modern Mind: An Intellectual History of the 20th Century*. Harper Perennial.
- [36] OECD. *Evaluating Public Participation in Policy Making*. OECD Publications, 2005.
- [37] Oloo A. 2006: *Devolution and Democratic Governance: Institute of Policy Analysis and Research*.
- [38] Wakwabubi, E. and Shiverenje, H. 2003. *Guidelines on Participatory Development in Kenya: Critical Reflection on Training, Policy and Scaling Up*. Nairobi.
- [39] World Bank (2000). *The Community Driven Development Approach in the African Region: A vision of Poverty Reduction through empowerment*.

AUTHORS

First Author – Cleophas Ndiege Kaseya, Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Governance, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
Second Author – Dr. Ephantus Kihonge, Supervisor, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology